Central Corridor/Traditional Neighborhood Zoning Study: Overview 03/04/11

Background

- The study is a review of the zoning requirements for properties along the University Avenue portion of the Central Corridor.
- The study is an implementation step following adoption of the *Central Corridor Development Strategy* (CCDS) and station area plans as part of the City's Comprehensive Plan.
- Current zoning along the corridor (primarily B3 general commercial and I1-light industrial) does not achieve the development vision detailed in the City's adopted plans.
- Traditional Neighborhood (TN) zoning districts appear to be the best fit to achieve the vision. TN zoning encourages compact, walkable, mixed use development.
- TN districts have been used in places throughout the city since 2004.
- Now is also a good time to review experience to date and "tweak" the TN district regulations, which
 would apply wherever TN zoning is used throughout the city.

Key Points

- A new Traditional Neighborhood 4 district is being proposed which will allow more height and density
 where appropriate. Tweaks to the existing TN districts are being proposed to better fit existing market
 conditions.
- Properties in the "area of change" as identified in the Central Corridor Development Strategy are being
 proposed for rezoning to a variety of revamped TN2 TN4 districts, with some industrial zoning
 maintained in the West Midway area.
- Most new auto-oriented uses will be prohibited. Existing auto-oriented uses could remain indefinitely.
- Proposed zoning will preserve and protect adjacent low-density residential areas.
- New zoning requirements will primarily affect property owners and developers who are planning for new building construction.
- Existing buildings and businesses can remain indefinitely, until the owner decides to redevelop the property.
- Existing uses that become legally non-conforming under the new zoning can remain indefinitely.
- Cities no longer have eminent domain (condemnation) authority for redevelopment purposes, so change will happen when owners decide to redevelop.
- TN zoning will significantly expand development capacity along the corridor while enhancing the design of new development.
- The new zoning will replace the existing Central Corridor Overlay district, which expires 6/20/11.

Summary of Planning Commission Recommended Changes in Response to Public Hearing Testimony

- Existing auto repair, auto specialty, and auto body businesses within ¼ mile of University Ave. that would become non-conforming under TN zoning should be allowed to expand in the future without a non-conforming use permit.
- A larger area of light industrial zoning should be retained in the West Midway industrial area.
- Recommended zoning should be changed in certain areas to ensure a better transition between higherdensity development and lower-density residential areas.
- Design requirements should be added that require building stepbacks on upper floors for taller buildings and for buildings over 25 ft. that are located next to low-density, residentially-zoned properties.
- Followup studies should be conducted on the following topics: 1) granting density bonuses in exchange for affordable housing or other public benefits; 2) allowing accessory residential units in certain circumstances; and 3) City policy regarding shared commercial-residential alleys, including issues such as financing, paving and repair, snow plowing, lighting, cleaning and safety.

More information: www.stpaul.gov/centralcorridor. Click on Central Corridor Zoning Study. Questions or comments to sarah.zorn@ci.stpaul.mn.us.